# Cynthia Karlsson

# Education:

*Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University*, Blacksburg | Virginia

Doctoral Candidate: Behavioral Health Research and Translational Science: In progress: anticipated 12/2023 Master of Public Health

* Diversity Scholar
* Iota Delta Rho Honor Society (Interdisciplinary Research Honor Society)
* Graduate Certificate: Future Professoriate

*California University of Pennsylvania* | California, Pennsylvania Master's Degree: Exercise Science and Health Promotion

*Pacific Lutheran University* | Tacoma, Washington

Bachelor’s Degree: Exercise Science Presidential Scholarship Recipient

# Work Experience

**University of Washington Bothell | Bothell, WA**

Part-time Lecturer

Spring 2023: Foundation and Principles of Health Education and Communication (Hybrid)

Spring 2022: BHS 403 Introduction to Epidemiology (Hybrid)

**Washington State Department of Health | Tumwater, WA**

9/2015 – Current

*Rapid Health Information NetwOrk (RHINO) Program Manager (syndromic surveillance)* 11/2020- Current */*

*Sr. Epidemiologist*: 7/2022

*COVID-19 Incident Management Team (1/2019-2021)*

* Epidemiologist Training and Development – Training Deputy
* Training Team
* Epidemiology Liaison
* CASPER (Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response)

2/2016 - 1/2020

*Senior Health Educator/Supervisor*

Evidence-Based Public Health Project Manager

Manage agency initiative on Evidence-Based Public Health Practice as set forth by the Chief of Public Health Practice: lead, directed, and supervise a team to develop, implement, and evaluate a Workforce Development Evidence-Based Public Health Education Program: using andragogical/pedagogical best practices, strategies, principles, concepts, and evaluation methods to develop and assess agency health education program. E.g., <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E6G_6VdUhL0&feature=youtu.be>

9/2015 – 2/3016

*Senior Health Educator*

* Conduct systematic literature reviews, formative and summative research, and qualitative and quantitative evaluations
* Research and analyze health issues, affected populations, well-being/health promotion/public health theories, models, and frameworks to ensure effective programmatic strategies and interventions.
* Provide health education, health promotion, and health communication consultation, training, and technical assistance to the agency, e.g., literature review consultation, mentoring, and training
* Establish a budget: for project proposals and monitor the budget throughout the project
* Draft proposals and negotiate the scope of work: time frames, budget, deliverables, and staff assignments

*Academic Guidance Team Member*: cross-agency workgroup to establish the agency as an Academic Health Department, guide priorities for academic engagement at the agency, align academic research with public health practice and priorities, develop opportunities for student engagement and workforce development, identify areas for collaborative research, and advance the use of evidence-based practice at the agency.

Health and Wellness Advisory Council: cross-agency workgroup established to set the agency's wellness priorities to support employees' efforts in improving their health and productivity.

*Accomplishments:* 2017 Northwest Center for Public Health Practice Leadership Institute (LI) Scholar. The LI focused on decision-making processes, change management skills, conflict resolution, health equity, and social justice lens as it affects health, and applying relevant information about urgent and changing public health issues to make challenging leadership decisions equitably and strategically.

# Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech) | Blacksburg, VA

11/2010 – 7/2014

*Director of Wellness*

* Direct Wellness program design, plan, development, implementation, and evaluation based on cutting-edge practices and foundational health prevention methodologies and theories, set short- and long-range program goals in alignment with the organizational strategic plan, and ensure program compliance with applicable federal laws.
* Supervised five direct reports: Assistant Director, program managers (Wellness, Employee Assistance Program, and Worklife Program), and administrative assistant. Program Managers were responsible for supervising health educators, graphic designers, web and social media staff, and student employees.
* Developed and maintained Business/Operating Plan: (Identification, Assessment, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation), and return on investment (ROI) goals based on cost/benefits analysis.
* Oversight of the Wellness program, internal Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Worklife program budgets, plus an annual stipend from the University's President's discretionary funds.
* Analyzed high-claims healthcare aggregate data (preventative, prescriptive, mental health, and biometric data) to direct wellness programming and set priorities.

*Accomplishments:* Researched, advocated, and received permission and funding to pilot seasonal influenza immunizations for non- benefitted employees. Case: cleaning staff and food handlers were primarily non-benefitted employees. Non-benefitted employees typically did not call in sick when they were ill, primarily because they were not compensated for sick leave and therefore came to work when ill. This was particularly problematic as they were often in close contact with most employees and students through food handling or the scope of their work. Preliminary indications suggested a 22% decrease in sick days by benefitted employees during the pilot flu season compared to the previous three years.

Instituted *Finding Balance (Wellness) Conference at Virginia Tech 2012 – now in its 10th year.*

# Virginia Western Community College | Roanoke, VA

*Academic Years:* 2014 / 2015

*Instructor of Record:* College of Health Sciences

# Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University | Blacksburg, VA

Co-instructor: Health Nutrition, Food, and Exercise (HNFE) Graduate Teaching Assistant: 2014 / 2015

HNFE: Epidemiology and Behavioral Health Theory for Public Health Graduate Research Assistant: 2013 / 2014

Translational Research in Behavioral Science: Conducted literature reviews, developed procedural study guides, IRB protocols, and study materials, and conducted study assessments and post-study effectiveness evaluations

# University of Virginia (UVA) | Charlottesville, VA

9/2008 – 9/2009

*Wellness Coordinator*

Created a comprehensive wellness program, starting with the development of a Business/Operating Plan (Identification, Assessment, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation), ROI goals, and recruitment of key stakeholders and Wellness Council members. High-claim analysis drove program planning, which included: reducing short and long-term disability claims, absenteeism, and presentism through productivity metrics, loss time reports, and employee tenure analysis.

*Accomplishments:* Selected to participate in the commission to move the University of Virginia to a smoke-free campus. This was a challenging and complex issue to address at a university with significant funding and historical ties to the tobacco industry. It required a dispensation from the Governor, allowing the University of Virginia Health System and Medical School to go smoke-free. As part of the coordinated plan, the university adjusted its medical plan to cover free smoking cessation programs, free nicotine patches and gum, and support groups sponsored by the wellness program.

# Providence St. Peter Hospital | Olympia, WA

Women’s Heart Health Clinic Program Manager

# Capital Medical Center | Olympia, WA

*Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation Specialist and Diabetes Educator*

**Boards and Membership Activities**

# SOPHE (Society for Public Health Education) Board of Trustee: Secretary 2022

**NCHEC (National Commission for Health Education Credentialing) Board of Commissioners 2023 - 2024**

*Board of Commissioners Vice Coordinator,* DBPPP: 2023-2024

*Division Board for DBPPP* (2019-2024): The DBPPP is responsible for promoting professional preparation and works with colleges, universities, and accrediting agencies to improve professional preparation programs and promote best practices in health education settings, and updates the certification application and eligibility review process.

**APHA 2019 Annual Meeting continuing education credit evaluator: International Health sessions** (review sessions for continuing education credit worthiness: CHES, CME/OP, CNE, and CPH).

**Tacoma Community College:** Community Health BAS Program Advisory Committee member (2019- current)

# HESPA II practice analysis collaboration between NCHEC (National Commission for Health Education Credentialing) / SOPHE (Society of Public Health Education) 2018

Health Education Specialist Practice Analysis Panel (HESPA II)

An eighteen-member volunteer panel was recruited nationally to perform an in-depth analysis of health education specialists' contemporary and future competencies. The panel drafted a detailed content outline of the major Areas of Responsibilities, Competencies, and Sub-competencies and the associated knowledge necessary for proficiency as a health education specialist.

**SOPHE (Society of Public Health Education)** annual conference planning committee (2020-2022 conferences)

* + Full planning committee (2019-2022)
  + Sub-committee: program workgroup (2019-2022)
  + Annual conference abstract reviewer (2016, 2018, 2019, 2020)
  + Annual conference presenter (2015, 2018, 2019)

**Cancer Action Coalition of Virginia** 2013-current Board Member 2015-2017

HPV Prevention Committee Member 2013- current

**Susan G. Komen:** Blue Ridge Affiliate: Community Profile Committee Member: 2015 Responsible for the Quantitative Data Report compiled for the 2015 Community Profile Variable hours: Part-time 5-20 hours/week

<http://vablueridge.info-komen.org/site/DocServer/Komen_Virginia_Blue_Ridge_2015_Community_Profile_Report-.pdf?docID=16164>

# Selected Conference / Seminar Presentations:

Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) National Health Education Week October 2020. Emergency Management during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Stories from the Field.

American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting: November 2019, APHA Public Health Film Festival video presentation. Philadelphia, PA. Video Title: Public Health is Everywhere.

American Public Health Association (APHA) Annual Meeting: November 2018, oral presentation. San Diego, California. Abstract (4118.0) Abstract Title: University and Health Department Collaboration: Training Health Equity to a Workforce.

Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Annual Meeting: April 2018, oral presentation. Cleveland, Ohio. Abstract (34366) Abstract Title: Modernizing a Public Health Workforce: Strength Training the Public Health Way.

Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) Annual Meeting: April 2015, oral presentation. Portland, Oregon. Abstract (0484- 000562): Climbing the Appalachian Trail to Improve Non-Benefited Employees Flu Inoculation rates: A Pilot Study

Conference on Higher Education Pedagogy, hosted by the Center for Instructional Development and Educational Research (CIDER) at Virginia Tech: February 2015. Speaker: Enhancing the Climate of Diversity and Inclusion in the Classroom.

International Breast Cancer Prevention Symposium: October 2015, oral presentation Guadeloupe, French West Indies. Do women know the significant risk factors for developing breast cancer and potential prevention strategies? Survey suggests the answer is no for most women. IBCN Trainee Award (Peachey Award).

Society of Behavioral Medicine (SBM) Annual Meeting: April 2015, poster presentation. San Antonio, Texas. Abstract: Developing a Best-Practice Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program Targeting All Employees.

Graduate Research Symposium at Virginia Tech: March 2015, oral presentation: Targeting Non-Benefited Employees for Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program: Developing Best-Practices.

# Publications and in Progress Publications:

***NCHEC: A Competency-Based Framework for Health Education Specialists*** *–* The National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Contributing Author. (2020)

The newly released revised framework is based on the Health Education Specialist Practice Analysis II 2020 (HESPA II 2020), a project to update, refine and validate the model of health education practice. The HESPA II 2020 model is designed for those in the health education & promotion profession as a framework for professional preparation, credentialing, and professional development. The updated hierarchical model consists of 193 Sub -competencies, organized into 35 Competencies within eight major Areas of Responsibility. Additionally, the knowledge base needed by health education specialists was organized into ten conceptual topic areas, and 145 knowledge topics were validated as being used by health education specialists. The publication is an essential resource for health education students, college and university faculty, health education practitioners and employers, professional development providers, leaders of professional credentialing and program accreditation, and policymakers and funding agencies. The CHES and MCHES examinations will be revised based on this updated framework, **effective 2022**.

***NCHEC: The Health Education Specialist: A Companion Guide for Professional Excellence****:8th Edition.* The National Commission for Health Education Credentialing, Contributing Author. (2020)

The Eighth Edition of this Companion Guide is based on the Health Education Specialist Practice Analysis II 2020 (HESPA II 2020), a project to update, refine and validate the model of health education practice. In this publication, there are the newly delineated Eight Areas of Responsibility for Health Education Specialists, which can be used to assess health education knowledge. Instructors in professional preparation programs may find the format and organization of this book to be a useful supplement to textbooks and classroom lectures. The Companion Guide was developed to assist with preparation for both the CHES and MCHES Exams.

# Associations/Additional Information:

* CHES (Certified Health Education Specialist) Certification
* Northwest Public Health Leadership Institute certificate 2018 (Northwest Center for Public Health Practice at the University of Washington) 11/2017
* Cancer Action Coalition of Virginia:
  + Board Member 2015- 2017
  + HPV Prevention Committee Member 2013- current
* American Public Health Association member
  + American Public Health Association (APHA) (2014- 2018 conference abstract reviewer)
* Society of Public Health Education (SOPHE) member
  + (2016, 2018, 2019 conference abstract reviewer)
* Virginia State Representative for Health Promotion Advocates: Federal Healthy Worksite Initiatives
* National Consortium for Building Healthy Academic Communities
* Virginia Department of Health: Chronic Disease and Health Promotion Collaboration Network.
* FEMA Emergency Response Certifications (IS-29,100, 200, 700, 800); Public Information Officer (G0290, GO291)
* CDC Disaster Epidemiology Training/ CASPER (Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response)
* Smoking Cessation Facilitator, National Wellness Institute: Certified Worksite Wellness Specialist, WellCoaches: Health / Wellness and Basic WellCoaches

# Diversity Scholarship & Coursework Completed:

* Nominated and awarded Diversity Scholar at Virginia Tech. Diversity Scholars specialize in and advocate for the awareness, knowledge, and skills associated with diversity and inclusion in the Graduate School and greater community. A diversity scholar's goal is to create dialogue, provide advocacy, and implement change for a more diverse and inclusive experience for all graduate students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Diversity scholars propose, design, and implement projects that enhance equity, inclusion, and diversity. A colleague and I developed, trained, and disseminated multiple sessions of the training module: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Classroom. We presented to the Graduate School Dean, Heads of Departments, faculty (at their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Training Day), and students during as part of their curriculum. We also lead a training at the conference on Higher Education pedagogy to a standing room only audience.
* Diversity and Inclusion in a Global Society, Exploring Unconscious Bias, Teaching Race Beyond Black and White, The Ins and (Coming) Outs of Being Gay in the Classroom, Teaching Race at Historically White Colleges and Universities: Identifying and Dismantling the Walls of Whiteness, Indigenous Peoples and Health Inequities

# Professional Certification:

* CHES (Certified Health Education Specialist) Certification

# Service Activities:

Practicum Supervisor: selected students in the Master of Public Health Program

* Virginia Tech 2010-2015
* Washington State Department of Health 2017-2023

Enhancing the Climate of Diversity and Inclusion in the Classroom: developed materials used by colleges and programs at Virginia Tech to improve diversity and inclusion within the classroom.